

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Extension Service  
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INTERPRETATION OF TRENDS IN EXTENSION CLOTHING PROGRAM  
WESTERN STATES\*

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Accomplishments in the extension clothing program over the period 1942-50, both for the Western States and for the United States, have been charted graphically by the Annual Report Unit of the Division of Field Studies and Training. This has been done more for information to indicate trends for both the Western States and the whole country than for comparison. The following comments are based on the statistical information for the Western States. Along with the consideration of a good many factors involved in the development of the extension clothing program and the interpretation of the graphs and the selected statistics, some general conclusions as to trends in the clothing program in the Western States can be made: (1) Where we have been. (2) Where we are. (3) Where we are going.

Personnel Factors Must Be Considered

The number of extension workers on the job must be taken into account when accomplishments are being measured. All county home demonstration agents in the Western region report work done in the clothing program with adults and 4-H Clubs. The increase in county home demonstration personnel in 11 Western States, Alaska, and Hawaii, is as follows:

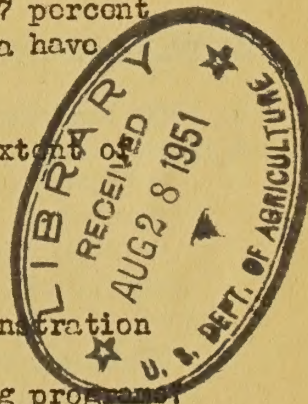
Year	County home demonstration agents	Assistant county home demonstration agents
1942 . . . . .	164 . . . . .	17
1951 (March 31) . . . . .	261 . . . . .	86

This is a total increase of 166 county and assistant county home demonstration agents in 9 years. In 1950 approximately 291 counties were served by home demonstration agents, 20 of them part time. In addition 114 county agricultural agents and 36 county 4-H Club agents reported time given to the clothing program. There are 403 agricultural counties in the Western States, of which 67 percent are served by home demonstration agents. All but one State and Alaska have full-time extension clothing specialists.

The following personnel questions must be raised in relation to the extent of accomplishments in the clothing program or any program in each State:

- (1) What has been the turn-over of home demonstration agents?
- (2) How many agents have initial appointments this year?
- (3) How many years has each county been organized with home demonstration agents?
- (4) How many agents have special training or a flair for clothing program?
- (5) How much local leadership has been developed in the clothing program over a period of several years?

\*Presented at the Western States Regional Extension Conference, Moscow, Idaho, July 24, 1951.





### Other Important Factors

A variety of conditions and situations influence the planning and carrying out of extension clothing programs in the several Western States. These conditions and situations vary by States and within States:

- (1) Long distance and sparse population.
- (2) Several income levels.
- (3) Shopping facilities.
- (4) Newly established families.
- (5) Increased number of small children.
- (6) Sports and outdoor recreation.
- (7) Number of high schools teaching sewing.
- (8) Sewing experience and skill of women and girls.
- (9) Extension assistance requested by families.

### Where We Have Been -- Western Region

(1) The number of families assisted with clothing construction in 1950 was more than double the 35,841 families assisted in 1942. The increase came with each year, reaching a peak in 1949 that was followed by a slight decrease of 1,700 families in 1950. The greatest increase was in the period 1947-49.

(2) The number of families assisted with the selection of clothing in 1942 was 39,961. There was a gradual increase each year, and the peak was reached in 1950. In the period 1942-50 the number of families assisted increased 99 percent.

(3) The highest peak for remodeling and renovation was 45,761 families assisted in 1943 during the war. The decrease each year was gradual, with the exception of 1948 when the number of families was only 1,200 less than for 1943.

(4) The number of families assisted with clothing accounts and budgets gradually increased from 1945 to 1950 with the exception of a decrease in 1949.

(5) The enrollment in 4-H clothing projects increased gradually from 1943 to 1950, from 22,051 to 49,172 members. This was a 123-percent increase in 8 years.

### Where We Are -- Western Region

In 1950 the numbers of families assisted with clothing program activities in the Western States, Alaska, and Hawaii, were as follows:

	Number of families assisted	Average number per home demon- stration agent
Clothing construction problems	84,989	263
Selection of clothing and textiles	70,673	219
Remodeling and care of clothing	37,262	115
Clothing accounts and budgets	16,121	50
Consumer education in clothing	29,342	91
4-H Club enrollment in clothing	49,172	152
Garments made by 4-H Club members	124,056	384



Thirty-seven percent of the total 4-H Club enrollment in the Western States in 1950 was in clothing projects. About 17 percent of a county home demonstration agent's time was given to the clothing program with adults and 4-H Club members. The agents were assisted by 12,097 local clothing project leaders, or 37 leaders per agent. In 1949, the highest peak of 86,706 families were assisted in clothing construction. The 4-H Club enrollment of 49,172 in clothing in 1950 was the highest of all years in the West. There was a decrease of 1,798 families assisted in remodeling in 1950 under 1949. Families assisted with clothing accounts and budgeting increased 4,534 in 1950 over 1949.

#### Where We Are Going -- Western Region

The westward march of the Nation's population during the past decade is shown by the census figures for 1950. These give the population of the 11 Western States as 19,412,227, an increase of 39.8 percent over 1940. Each Western State had an increase in population during the decade. The largest increases were in California with 51.9 percent, Arizona with 49.3 percent, and Nevada with 43.6 percent. The smallest increases were in Idaho with 11.5 percent and Montana with 5 percent. The Territories of Alaska and Hawaii both increased in population.

As a result of increased population there is a large number of newly established homes and families, young married couples and children under 6 and 10 years of age. Census figures for age groups are not yet available, but we know that the lower grades in most schools are crowded.

According to the Agricultural Census the number of farms decreased in each of the Western States in the period 1945-50. There was a rapid increase in part-time farming and suburban population, especially in the Coast States.

We can conclude from the information above, and from plans of work and reports of Western State clothing specialists, that effort is being made to conduct extension clothing programs with a larger number of families in the following groups: (1) Young couples, (2) mothers with young children, (3) rural nonfarm families, (4) part-time farming population, (5) lower-income families, (6) urban families in small towns and villages, and (7) 4-H Club boys and girls.

Some of the means of increasing effectiveness in the clothing program suggested in State extension reports are:

(1) High prices of clothing continue to make construction a need in most homes. Better fabrics on the market have also given families an opportunity to have better clothing at less cost if it is constructed at home. Information on new fabrics is always welcomed. It is thought that clothing construction will continue at the same high rate unless women are needed for defense production work. Farm families are better stocked than usual with clothing. However, farm clothing receives hard wear and needs replacing more often than nonfarm clothing.

(2) How to select good buys at current high prices is important to those who purchase ready-made clothing. The consumer wants to know what to look for in quality and construction in clothing.



(3) The demand of young mothers for assistance in making children's clothing will no doubt increase. Short cuts to save time in constructing clothing for both children and adults are popular.

(4) Clothing in relation to health, well-being, and pleasing appearance is emphasized with both adults and 4-H Club girls. Good posture, care of feet, and good grooming, are all important interests in the clothing program.

(5) Increased use of press and radio and more effective use of visual aids are considerations in conducting clothing programs.

(6) It is advised that more local leaders be trained to assist in judging 4-H clothing exhibits and revues to release the time of specialists and agents for more urgent work.

(7) Program adjustments can easily be made in emergencies. Well-organized county home demonstration councils make for possible coordination of forces upon short notice in emergencies.



SELECTED CLOTHING AND TEXTILE ITEMS -- UNITED STATES AND WESTERN REGIONAL TOTALS

(Information from 1950 Statistical Reports)

	Totals		Per H. D. A.	
	U. S.	West	U. S.	West
Number of families assisted with:				
Clothing construction problems . . . . .	1,171,418	84,989	340	263
The selection of clothing and textiles . . . . .	980,766	70,673	285	219
Care, Renovation, Remodeling of Clothing . . . . .	624,097	37,262	182	115
Clothing Accounts or Budgets . . . . .	176,283	16,121	51	50
Families assisted through cooperative associations or individually with the buying or clothing . . . . .				
	426,870	29,342	124	91
4-H Clothing Project:				
Boys enrolled . . . . .	1,613	471	.4	1.4
Girls enrolled . . . . .	647,915	48,701	188.5	150.6
Total enrollment . . . . .	649,528	49,172	189.0	152.0
Boys completing . . . . .	1,002	321	.3	1.0
Girls completing . . . . .	512,165	37,061	149.0	114.6
Total completions . . . . .	513,167	37,382	149.3	115.6
Percent completion . . . . .	79.0	76.0		
Garments made . . . . .	1,768,373	124,056	515	384
Garments remodeled . . . . .	477,195	13,739	139	43
Total 4-H Club Enrollment -- All Projects . . . . .	1,990,932	132,781	579	411
Percentage of total enrollment in Clothing Project . . . . .	32.6	37.0		
Voluntary local leaders assisting in clothing program . . . . .				
	125,013	12,097	36.4	37.4
Communities in which work was conducted . . . . .	49,068	4,276	14.3	13.2
Days spent in counties on clothing program				
Home Demonstration Agents . . . . .	134,055	16,763	39.0	51.8
4-H Club Agents . . . . .	9,877	979	2.9	3.0
Agricultural Agents . . . . .	1,835	648	.5	2.0
Total -- All County Workers . . . . .	145,767	18,390	42.4	56.8
State Extension Workers . . . . .	4,158	839	.5	2.6



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